
John Allen Chalk: Personal Correspondence

John Allen Chalk

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To: Jimmie Lovell

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August 11, 1970

Mr. Jimmy Lovell
P. O. Box 146
Palos Verdes Estates, California 90274

Dear Jimmy:

The July, 1970 issue was an exciting one. Thank you so much for all of the personal work put into that copy of Action. The reports from the field were outstanding and above all "the plan" put great new stirrings of hope within my heart. Count me a part of this effort in whatever specific and direct way I can help. The August, 1970 issue was also a great one. I know God must be using Action to bless and encourage many, many people around the world.

I have done everything I know to leave this congregation. I decided to come to Pepperdine and a week later simply couldn't bring myself to follow through with the decision I had made. Just three weeks ago I went before the elders and resigned effective the end of July. After thorough discussion with them, they prevailed on me to stay. It must be God's will that I stay here with this church, even though the burdens are greater than I can bear. The only way Sue, Mary Beth, John and I are able to stick with this situation is to simply let God have the duties and the burdens every moment of every day. We need your prayers so badly.

The cartoon on the front of the August issue appropriately describes church after church, including this one, even though we baptized more than ninety people last year and hopefully will baptize seventy-five to one hundred this year. The fact remains that in former years the Highland church has baptized as many as two hundred people in a year. The figure for this past year, however, represents three times as many baptisms as any other congregation in town (please do not put this in your next issue, it would embarrass the other congregations in town) I know many, many churches (that are not big churches) that are not baptizing twenty-five people a year. The College Church here in Abilene had eight hundred additions to its membership in 1965 and only forty of that eight hundred additions were baptisms, and only nine of those forty had not been previously connected with the congregation, as in the case of children of parents who were already members.

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C When I look at these conditions prevailing all over the country, and when I try to assume the fantastic burdens placed on me as a preacher of one of the bigger congregations in our brotherhood, I began to ask all kinds of very serious questions about the usefulness of the kinds of activities we are engaging in and the effectiveness of the ways we are organized. Please pray specifically for me and my family. I would give up every public opportunity to preach for the next ten years if I knew it would mean the saving of John and Mary Beth. This, of course, is not the way to guarantee their salvation, but Sue and I continue to beg God for wisdom in rearing them so that they do not become the kind of children we see coming out of the homes of elders and preachers - the children with whom I counsel every day during the school year here at ACC.

O I poured out a little of my heart to you in this letter only to say, you have added reasons to pray for us and to say we love you and support you in your great ministry through Action.

P Y Fraternally yours,

John Allen Chalk

JAC:lc

P. S. I will be sending more articles in a few days.